

has resulted in over 2,000 motels opening throughout the United States and Canada.

Super 8's success is predicated on the core operating values that Dennis and Ron instilled in their employees and motel owners: cleanliness, efficiency, and friendly service. From its inception, the founders and board members continually strived to better serve their customers. Some examples of their strong commitment to customer service are the implementation of one of the first toll-free reservation lines in the early 1970s and the VIP club, which currently has over 7.5 million members.

I will never forget when I returned home to Aberdeen and saw the first Super 8 Motel: a two story stucco building on Sixth Avenue, Southeast. At that time, very few people could conceive that this start-up business would reshape the hospitality industry. Thankfully, Dennis and Ron had the plan and the motivation to realize their goals and make believers out of ordinary folks in need of a place to stay on the road.

After my stays at Super 8 Motels, it was clear that this company was destined for greatness. Super 8 is a true American success story, which could not have been achieved without the hard work and determination of Dennis, Ron, and all of their hard-working staff. I am confident that Super 8 will continue to grow for many years to come, and I wish to extend my congratulations to everyone that has been involved in this monumental effort over the past 30 years.

#### JAPAN AND BURMA

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, it has come to my attention that since October of last year, the Government of Japan has funded at least 28 new projects in Burma totaling more than \$18 million. Some of these funds appear to have been provided directly to the illegitimate and repressive State Peace and Development Council, SPDC.

A question many of my colleagues may be asking is: Why is Japan providing assistance to Burma and the thugs in Rangoon when Burmese democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other members and supporters of the National League for Democracy, NLD, remain imprisoned?

I wish I knew the answer.

Providing assistance to Burma and the SPDC sends exactly the wrong message at the wrong time. Assistance to the junta prolongs the suffering of the Burmese people and props up an illegitimate regime, headed by Than Swe, which has tortured, murdered and raped with impunity.

It is time Japan gets with the program and pressures the SPDC to begin meaningful reconciliation with the NLD—the only legitimately elected leadership of that country.

Freedom needs Japan's help in Burma.

#### TRIBUTE TO MR. CLATIS WALKER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a valued educator in my State who is retiring in November after more than 30 years of service to the youth of Kentucky, Mr. Clatis Walker.

The education profession is one that people seem to take for granted from time to time in our society, but its importance cannot be overlooked. The impact educators have on future generations is paramount. This responsibility is made all the greater when the focus is on children with special needs. Mr. Walker has taken this responsibility and welcomed it throughout his career.

In 1972, Mr. Walker began his career as a special education teacher in Montgomery County, KY. Six years later, he became a field service consultant for the Bureau of Education for Exceptional Children for the Kentucky Department of Education.

Mr. Walker jumped back into the classroom in 1980 when he accepted the position as Special Education Work Study Program coordinator and Athletics Director at Bourbon County High School. In 1982, he returned to Montgomery County, where he began his teaching career. He spent the next 9 years serving in several capacities including, special education coordinator, early childhood coordinator, chairman of the Northeastern Bluegrass Education Cooperative Project, and Assistant Principal at J.B. McNabb Middle School.

A change in profession occurred in 1991 when he left the education field to become an assistant vice president at Montgomery Traders Bank, where he was a loan specialist. His absence in the Montgomery County school system was noticed and in 1993, Mr. Walker returned as the Director of Special Education and the Director of Public Relations.

In 1999, he was named the Executive Director of the Central Kentucky Special Education Cooperative. This cooperative aims to enhance the educational opportunities for its students by allowing the Kentucky Department of Education, school districts, and state universities to work together. The important work of this cooperative has taken place because of the leadership of Mr. Walker.

Mr. President, today I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring and recognizing the career of this outstanding Kentuckian, Mr. Clatis Walker.

#### HONORING LUCES

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize Lo Nuestro de Latinos Unidos Celebrando Salud, LUCES, or the Latino HIV/AIDS Task Force of Clark County, NV for its efforts to promote National Latino AIDS Awareness Day.

The 2nd Annual National Latino AIDS Awareness Day will mark the

last day of Hispanic Heritage Month, an annual celebration in which we recognize the tremendous contributions of our Nation's Latino community. This day will focus attention on an important health challenge facing the Latino community, and on how we can help the community overcome this challenge.

Latinos account for 14 percent of all HIV infection cases and 15 percent of AIDS cases in Clark County. It is critical that we stop the spread of this terrible disease. The dedication of LUCES to educating and advocating on this important issue in Clark County is commendable.

I would like to take a moment to recognize several individuals for their hard work and strong commitment on this issue: Cheryl Ballard, Marcia English, Cherie Filler-Maietta, Robbie Keeley, Ernesto Martinez, Julie McCain, Keanu Medina, Molly Puno, Elias Zamorano, and Louise Zuniga.

Please join me in congratulating the members of LUCES for their work to promote public health, and in wishing them great success in their future endeavors.

#### LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT OF 2003

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the need for hate crimes legislation. On May 1, 2003, Senator KENNEDY and I introduced the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act, a bill that would add new categories to current hate crimes law, sending a signal that violence of any kind is unacceptable in our society.

On October 4, 2000, in LaCrosse, WI, Jason Welch and Jason Elisius, both 21, were charged with a hate crime for allegedly violently targeting two gay men because of their sexual orientation.

I believe that the Government's first duty is to defend its citizens, to defend them against the harms that come out of hate. The Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act is a symbol that can become substance. I believe that by passing this legislation and changing current law, we can change hearts and minds as well.

#### A NOTE OF GRATITUDE

Mr. PRYOR. Mr. President, I rise today to acknowledge the assistance and support one soldier's family has shown him during his 26 years of service in the United States Army. Lieutenant Colonel Andy Lucas, currently serving with J37, Joint Task Force Global Network Operations, is the oldest of Andrew and Shirley Lucas' five children. The entire family attend the University of Arkansas, making me particularly proud because that is my alma mater, and Mr. Lucas and three of his children have bravely served our country in the military.

Lieutenant Colonel Lucas wrote to me on the occasion of his retirement